

A resolution by Supervisors Lipscomb, Sr., and Martin, supporting Milwaukee County citizens and employees throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including requesting information and recommendations from the Administration regarding utilization of County facilities in handling the crisis, support of public transit and its workers, and analysis about the fiscal impact of shutdowns of private businesses and closures to Milwaukee County's Adopted Budget and cash reserves, by recommending adoption of the following:

A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been a global public health concern since the end of 2019 when it was first discovered abroad and has been a severe crisis in the United States (U.S) since February 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has been monitoring the crisis and providing communication to Milwaukee County (the County) citizens and its employees since February 2020, including proper hygiene measures, installation of hand sanitizer stations throughout County facilities, and guidance as to the spread and containment of the virus; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, State of Wisconsin (the State) Governor Evers declared a public health emergency one day later, on March 12, 2020, which was also the date of the first known COVID-19 diagnosis in the County; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the County Executive, in conjunction with OEM, made an emergency proclamation on March 13, 2020, and released several Administrative Orders between March 13, 2020, and April 1, 2020, providing guidance to County employees related to:

- Travel outside of the State
- Teleworking
- Social distancing
- Self-quarantine
- the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, County employees began transitioning to telework if ready and able; and

46 WHEREAS, the Safer at Home order mandated by Governor Evers on
47 March 24, 2020, further limited the operations of essential and non-essential
48 businesses; and
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50 WHEREAS, on April 1, 2020, FFCRA was enacted by the Federal government,
51 resulting in a new leave policy for County employees; and
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53 WHEREAS, County employees who are unable to telework and are considered
54 “non-essential” employees may use the Employee Sick Paid Leave Bank (ESPL Bank)
55 consisting of 80 hours of sick leave to be used for sick leave situations related to
56 COVID-19 (part-time, hourly, or seasonal employees working less than 40 hours receive
57 time on a pro-rated basis, but consisting of at least 40 hours); and
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59 WHEREAS, County employees may utilize the Family Medical Leave Paid
60 Childcare Leave (FMLA for Childcare) consisting of 12 weeks of expanded FMLA time
61 to care for any children whose school or place of childcare has been closed due to
62 COVID-19; and
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64 WHEREAS, if a County employee needs to use FMLA for Childcare, they will
65 need to use the ESPL Bank or accrued time off (sick, vacation, personal, or holiday) for
66 the first two weeks or else elect to take them unpaid; and
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68 WHEREAS, the remaining 10 weeks are paid at 66 percent of an employee’s
69 regular rate of pay; and
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71 WHEREAS, if an employee uses all 80 hours of the ESPL Bank, they may need
72 to use their regular sick leave, vacation, accrued holiday time, or personal time to
73 continue receiving a paycheck and, if these options are not available, it may be the case
74 that the employee must take unpaid leave; and
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76 WHEREAS, it is an emotional and financial burden to both not receive a normal
77 paycheck and manage the uncertainty of employment status; and
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79 WHEREAS, employees that are considered essential are often interacting
80 directly with the public, while also needing to manage the guidance on hygiene, health,
81 and social distancing, including County nurses, doctors, medical examiner staff, health
82 and human services staff, transit employees, correctional officers, Sheriff deputies, and
83 park workers, amongst others; and
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85 WHEREAS, these essential employees are going above and beyond their normal
86 duties and deserve recognition for their service to the County; and
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88 WHEREAS, many revenue-generating operations for the County have been
89 closed for weeks and could continue to be closed for weeks or months; and
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91 WHEREAS, several County facilities and operations have been impacted
92 including:

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- 94 • Parks facilities, rentals, and concessions, including, but not limited to, the
- 95 Mitchell Park Domes, Boerner Botanical Gardens, golf courses, disc golf
- 96 courses, dog parks, and community centers
- 97 • the Zoo
- 98 • reduction of operational hours of the Milwaukee County Transit System,
- 99 loss of revenue due to less transit riders because of telework and “stay at
- 100 home” orders, and elimination of fares to protect the public and transit
- 101 workers

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105 WHEREAS, at its meeting of March 26, 2020, the Milwaukee County Board of
106 Supervisors adopted File No. 20-288, which included an appropriation of \$1 million
107 towards emergency preparedness for COVID-19; and

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109 WHEREAS, included in the appropriation is \$500,000 for new Capital Project
110 WO72101 – Laptops COVID-19 Emergency, which provides technology to enable
111 County employees to telework, if they were not already able, and \$500,000 to new
112 Capital Project WO72001 – COVID-19 Emergency to address potential future expenses
113 related to COVID-19; and

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115 WHEREAS, it is possible that there could be Federal and State reimbursement
116 related to costs incurred due to COVID-19, but there is uncertainty around when and
117 how much; and

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119 WHEREAS, the Office of the Comptroller has advised that the following
120 additional areas are anticipated to be impacted by the crisis:

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- 122 • Property Tax revenue
 - 123 • Sales Tax revenue
 - 124 • Fringe benefits
 - 125 • Other revenues (e.g. Potawatomi and/or investment earnings)
 - 126 • Other Federal and State matching and reimbursement revenues
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130 WHEREAS, it is unclear how long this public health crisis will last and estimates
131 on the loss of revenue to the County cannot yet be calculated, but it is likely to be much
132 more than the available balance in the Appropriation for Contingencies account; and

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WHEREAS, the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of the Comptroller are working with individual departments to understand the fiscal impacts of closures and adjustments, as well as determining the impact if the crisis continues on for several more months and possible reimbursement of losses from Federal and State sources; and

WHEREAS, at the meeting of the Committee of the Whole on March 24, 2020, Doctor Ben Weston, Medical Director, Emergency Medical Services, OEM, advised that lack of facility space for individuals infected with COVID-19 is a concern as this virus progresses and that we have not yet reached the peak of infection in the County; and

WHEREAS, due to County facility closures, it may be the case that those facilities could be used to provide additional hospital space or could be used to help individuals safely and properly quarantine if they are not able to find adequate space; and

WHEREAS, it is the priority of the County to ensure the health and safety of its citizens and employees; and

WHEREAS, it is the priority of the County to ensure the stability of its employees by recognizing the necessary work of its essential employees, providing adequate supplemental leave for those affected by COVID-19, promoting telework options for all that are able, and helping all employees handle the mental, emotional, and financial uncertainty of this crisis; and

WHEREAS, to provide this critical support to its employees, the County will benefit from accurate and comprehensive information related to affected departments; and

WHEREAS, lawmakers in the both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate requested that local, State, and Federal public health officials monitor and track racial and demographic data related to the spread of COVID-19, in order to protect those most at-risk of contracting the virus and to provide aid to areas that could see greater rates of infection; and

WHEREAS, the County is one of the few communities in the U.S. collecting and monitoring this type of data; and

WHEREAS, in the County, COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting people of color, especially people of color with lower incomes; and

WHEREAS, although black or African American citizens are approximately 26 percent of the population of the County, they account for 609 of the 1,324 cases of COVID-19 in the County, or approximately 46 percent, according to the most recent data at the time of drafting from the County COVID-19 Dashboard; and

180 WHEREAS, of the 49 confirmed deaths as a result of COVID-19 in the County,
181 35, or approximately 71 percent, were black or African American, according to the most
182 recent data at the time of drafting from the County COVID-19 Dashboard; and
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184 WHEREAS, the tracking of this data will help local and State public health
185 officials better coordinate and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in communities that are
186 most at risk in the County; and
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188 WHEREAS, the County declared racism as a public health crisis on
189 May 20, 2019, and the spread of COVID-19 demonstrates the racial disparities in health
190 outcomes and the need for better access to healthcare and health education in
191 communities of color; and
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193 WHEREAS, information related to COVID-19 changes on a daily, and sometimes
194 an hourly basis, necessitating frequent updates to policymakers; and
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196 WHEREAS, the Committee of the Whole, at its meeting of April 9, 2020,
197 recommended adoption of File No. 20-298 (vote 17-0); now, therefore,
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199 BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County (the County) is dedicated to the health
200 and safety of its citizens and employees and the successful management of the
201 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; and
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203 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
204 (County Board) hereby requests that the Office of the Comptroller, with the support of
205 the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and all Milwaukee County (the
206 County) departments, provide a monthly report regarding the fiscal impacts of COVID-
207 19 to the County's Adopted Budget and cash reserves throughout the duration of the
208 public health emergency; and
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210 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the report from the Office of the Comptroller shall
211 also include potential impacts to the County's credit rating, as well as the condition,
212 timing, or pricing of anticipated bond issuances; and
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214 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby requests DAS, with the
215 support of all County departments, provide a monthly report regarding the
216 recommended steps to address any budgetary shortfalls to County operations
217 throughout the duration of the public health emergency; and
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219 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby requests that the Office
220 of the Treasurer provide a report regarding latest projected impacts on investment
221 earnings; and
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223 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby requests that the Office
224 of the County Executive provide a report on all anticipated applications for Federal or
225 State assistance in the form of direct payments as is outlined in the Coronavirus Aid,
226 Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 or through reimbursement or grant
227 payments; and
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229 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the reports shall include information regarding
230 utilization of County facilities in assisting hospitals and health care providers,
231 recommendations for the Milwaukee County Transit System and its employees, and
232 additional steps the County can take to combat COVID-19.
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